

Message Text

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ACTION SP-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SS-15 L-03

ACDA-07 MC-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-07 ERDA-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 DHA-02 /076 W

-----211053Z 119430 /10

R 210405Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4033

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4244

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS:MASS

SUBJ: US ARMS SALES POLICY

REF: (A) STATE 115244, (B) STATE 115409, (C) STATE 115379

1. SUMMARY: PER INSTRUCTION REF (A), DCM REVIEWED NEW U.S. ARMS TRANSFER POLICY WITH MOFA VICE MINISTER YOON. YOON RESPONDED BY STATING THAT HE ASSUMED NEW POLICY WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH U.S. SUPPORT FOR ROK FORCE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT PARK'S NON-AGGRESSION PROPOSAL WOULD INCLUDE A MUTUAL "FREEZING" OF ARMAMENT LEVELS. ADDITION BRIEFINGS WILL BE UNDERTAKEN NEXT WEEK. END SUMMARY

2. FOLLOWING THE GUIDANCE PROVIDEDN REFERENCES (A) AND (C), DCM BRIEFED MOFA VICE MINISTER YOON ON MAY 21 ABOUT NEW U.S. ARMS TRANSFER POLICY. BECAUSE OF THE VERY COMPLICATED NATURE OF THE ISSUE, DCM PROVIDED MOFA WITH A COPY OF THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT UNDERLINING THE KEY POINTS RAISED IN REFERNCE (A) AND DOUBLE UNDERLINING THE ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE IN REFERENCE (C). DCM EMPHASIZED THE NEW POLICY OF RESTRAINT.

3. IN RESPONSE, YOON MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

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(A) HE ASSUMED THAT THE NEW POLICY WOULD NOT DIMINISH U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE ROKG'S FORCE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. HE SAID THAT SUCH A DIMINUTION, IN ADDITION TO TROOP WITHDRAWAL, WOULD BE A "DOUBLE BLOW" THAT ROKG WOULD FIND VERY DIFFICULT TO HANDLE. DCM THEN REVIEWED AGAIN THE GUIDANCE IN REFERENCE (C).

(B) HE SAID THAT "SINCE THERE IS NO HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM IN KOREA", THE PARAGRAPH DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE WAS NOT APPLICABLE. DCM SUGGESTED THAT HE READ IT CAREFULLY.

(C) DURING A DISCUSSION OF ADVANCED WEAPON SYSTEMS THAT MIGHT BE PERCEIVED AS DESTABILIZING, YOON STATED THAT IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION THAT PRESIDENT PARK'S NON-AGGRESSION PROPOSAL CONCEPT WOULD INCLUDE AN AGREEMENT TO "FREEZE" ARMAMENT LEVELS AT SOME LEVEL OF EQUIVALENCY. IT WOULD NOT BE A DISARMAMENT PROPOSAL, BUT AT LEAST WOULD PUT A CAP ON A POTENTIAL ARMS RACE. IN THIS CONNECTION, YOON EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR ROKG TO CLOSE PRESENT GAP IN NORTH-SOUTH MILITARY IMBALANCE, NOT ONLY AS A DETERRENT, BUT ALSO BECAUSE HE FELT THAT THE NORTH WOULD NOT COME TO A CONFERENCE TABLE UNLESS A MILITARY BALANCE HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED. HE SPECULATED THAT THE NORTH HAD BROKEN OFF THE TALKS IN 1973 BECAUSE IT HAD A MILITARY SUPERIORITY.

(D) YOON SPECULATED THAT NEW POLICY WILL PROVIDE NEW BUSINESS TO NON-U.S. PRODUCERS. HE INDICATED GREAT SKEPTICISM THAT EUROPEAN PRODUCERS WOULD COOPERATE. (COMMENT: THIS WAS MAY HAVE BEEN MORE THAN INNOCENT COMMENT. IT MAY HAVE BEEN AN INDICATOR OF ROKG THINKING.)

(E) HE POINTED OUT THAT KOREA HAD NOT BEEN SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED, WHEREAS JAPAN HAD. DCM RESPONDED BY POINTING OUT THAT POLICY INCORPORATES SPECIFIC PROVISIONS "TO PROMOTE.....THE SECURITY OF OUR CLOSE FRIENDS" AND TO PROVIDE PRESIDENT WITH AUTHORITY TO "DETERMINE THAT COUNTRIES FRIENDLY TO U.S." REQUIRE

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ADVANCED WEAPONRY "TO OFFSET QUANTITATIVE AND OTHER DISADVANTAGES IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A REGIONAL BALANCE." THIS SEEMED TO SATISFY YOON.

4. SINCE QUESTION OF WHETHER NEW POLICY WILL BE DISCUSSED DURING NEXT WEEKS CONSULTATIONS DID NOT ARISE, DCM DID NOT USE POINTS INCLUDED IN LAST TWO SENTENCES OF PARAGRAPH 2 OF REF (C).

5. EMBASSY IS PLANNING FOLLOW-ON BRIEFINGS NEXT WEEK. AMBASSADOR WILL DISCUSS NEW POLICY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER. DCM AND MAAG CHIEF TOGETHER WILL BRIEF MND VICE MINISTER AND MND ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR LOGISTICS.
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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 21-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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